



South Dakota Department of the Military South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs



SALUTE TO OUR VETERANS

Americans have a sacred trust with those who wear the uniform of the United States of America. Our nation's servicemen and women are our best and brightest, enlisting in times of peace and war, serving with honor under the most difficult circumstances, and making sacrifices that many of us cannot begin to image.

This weekend as we gather to honor our veterans, let us all reflect upon the invaluable contributions of our country's veterans and reaffirm our commitment to provide them and their families with the support they have earned.

"There is no greater sacrifice than choosing to serve your country, and we must never forget the men and women who had the courage to fight for our democracy," said Steve Harding, deputy secretary of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs.

"We must never allow ourselves to forget that America, as we know it exists because of the sacrifices of our veterans," said Harding. "God bless them and their families."



Inside this issue:

Women Veterans Open House	2
Welcome Home 114th Security Force	2
Vietnam Veterans Tribute Project	3
Veterans Deals and Discounts	3
Drug Free Message	4
Hero2Hired	5
Upcoming Events	6

WOMEN VETERANS OPEN HOUSE

The VA Black Hills Health Care System (VABHHCS) will host a Women Veterans Open House on Tuesday, November 13. The open house will be held in the McKeel Room of the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology Surbeck Center (501 St. Joseph Street) in Rapid City.

All women who have served in the military or who are currently serving are encouraged to partake in the open house from 4 – 5 p.m. to receive information on health care and educational benefits, as well as socialize with other women Veterans and enjoy refreshments.

The Open House is an effort to reach female veterans and increase awareness of available services. Some topics covered will be women specific primary care, maternity care, sexual trauma, contraception and infertility, menopause management, educational opportunities, scholarships, homeless programs, and wellness and weight management.

For more information or questions please call contact Dianna Monahan, RN - VABHHCS Women Veterans Program Manager at 605-347-2511 ext 7247.

AMERICAN
WOMEN
VETERANS

WELCOME HOME AND THANK YOU

Twenty seven members of the 114th Security Forces Squadron, South Dakota Air National Guard, returned to Sioux Falls on Wednesday, November 7, 2012.

The Airmen deployed in April 2012 to an undisclosed operating location in Southwest Asia for six months.

While overseas they performed a full spectrum of security, force protection and law enforcement duties for U.S. and Allied forces, in direct support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

A demobilization ceremony will be held at Joe Foss Field at a later date.



Photo Courtesy of SF Argus Leader

VIETNAM VETERANS TRIBUTE PROJECT

For nearly a century, November 11 has been a day to honor veterans. In 1919, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed the day the first observance of what was then Armistice Day. He had this to say: "To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of nations."

This November marks the 30th anniversary of The Wall and the Department of Defense launched its 50th commemoration of the Vietnam War at The Wall on Memorial Day.

As part of this commemoration, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund Committee asked states to have the names of their heroes, that appear on the National Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall, read and recorded. Once completed, each state's video will be uploaded to the Wall's website for all to view. It will be a national thank you and welcome home to all the Vietnam Veterans.

Schools, universities, museums, veterans groups, sports teams and local community leaders have joined together to create a national tribute to our Vietnam Veterans.

South Dakota's names were read by T. F. Riggs High School students: Tessa Myren, Grace Gunderson, Lydia Kanz, Sarah Kanz, Joni Willoughby, Justin Oakland, Grant Erwin, Louis Mehlhaff, Douglas Bachand, and Adam Bollinger from Pierre.

Once we have the link to the website we will forward it to all of you to view.



HONORING VETERANS WITH MILITARY DEALS AND DISCOUNTS

Veterans Day is soon approaching and there are many restaurants and businesses who want to thank our veterans, for their service to this great nation, by providing them with discounts or a free meal. Here are three websites that have posted information regarding military/veterans discounts: <http://www.military.com/veterans-day/veterans-day-military-discounts.html>
<http://militarybenefits.info/veterans-day-discounts-sales-deals-free-meals/>
<http://themilitarywallet.com/veterans-day-free-meals-and-discounts/>

Most companies will require some form of military ID — these include a Military ID Card, a current LES, drivers license with military designation, veterans service organization membership card or a copy of your discharge papers.

Also, it might be a good idea to call ahead to verify locations, times, and level of participation. Many of the listed companies are franchises and may have different local policies.

STUDENTS RECOGNIZED FOR CREATIVE DRUG-FREE MESSAGE

Custer Elementary School students were recognized by two South Dakota National Guard helicopter pilots Oct. 25 for their creative drug-free message during the National Guard's annual Red Ribbon Week campaign in October.

Pilots Chief Warrant Officer 4 Christian Frank and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Dean Sueflow presented the students with an aerial photo of the students outside forming a Custer Wildcat paw, the school's mascot.

"Since we are the Custer Wildcats we decided to design a paw," said Joey Kortemeyer, physical education teacher. "Our theme for Red Ribbon Week was PAWS-itively drug free."

Red Ribbon Week is the nation's oldest and largest drug prevention program, reaching millions of American students every year. It serves as a vehicle for communities and individuals to take a stand for the hopes and dreams of their children through a commitment to drug prevention and education.

This year, the S.D. Guard's Counterdrug program organized Red Ribbon Week events with 43 western South Dakota schools. One of the events is the drug-free flyover, where students make a design of a drug-free message with their bodies and then have the message photographed from the air by the Guard. The students also receive a briefing from Guard members on living a drug-free life.

Frank was one of the pilots who flew an OH-58 helicopter over Custer Elementary. Frank and Sueflow were asked by the Guard's Counterdrug program to present the photo to the school, which also includes their sons.

"We saw it as an opportunity to make this presentation special," said Frank. "I told the students that they did a great job of putting together the Wildcat paw. It takes teamwork to do what they did, and in life it is important to work as a team – whether that is sitting in the classroom or at home helping the family."

"This was great for the students to meet the pilots, otherwise they never meet who is flying the helicopter," said Kortemeyer. "To make this connection with the kids showed them that dads and regular people in our community are making positive choices. You do not have to be a superhero to be successful."



PAWSitively



HERO2HIRED CONNECTS EMPLOYERS WITH VETERANS

Gov. Dennis Daugaard declared November as “Hire Veterans First” month and issued a proclamation asking South Dakotan businesses and government agencies to hire military veterans.

“I encourage South Dakota business leaders, public officials, and the leaders of civic and fraternal organizations that have employment opportunities to hire veterans for those positions,” said Gov. Daugaard, in a S.D. Department of Labor and Regulation press release. “Veterans make excellent employees.”

One Department of Defense program seeks to make that connection between employers and veterans. Hero2Hired (H2H) is a website designed to make it easy for veterans of all military branches, as well as National Guard and Reserve service members to connect to and find jobs with military-friendly companies. The program is also available to the veteran or service member’s spouse.

H2H also offers career exploration tools, military-to-civilian skills translations, education and training resources, as well as a mobile app. Support for H2H is provided through the Department of Defense’s Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program.

“In addition to searchable job postings of military-friendly employers all over the country, H2H provides many other valuable tools to find a job, all in one place,” said Dan Popowski, Hero2Hired employment transition coordinator for South Dakota. “H2H is a one-stop shop for job seekers and employers. Not only is it free to both parties, but it offers an array of powerful tools.”

For the job seeker, H2H provides a search tool for jobs relevant to their military occupation or skills, exploration of alternate career paths, a career assessment tool to link them to relevant careers, information about different industries, education and training resources, and the ability to join communities with similar interests and provide for networking opportunities.

For the employer, H2H provides free unlimited job postings, a forum to promote and market their company, provides direct access to qualified candidates who already have background checks and security clearances, which helps reduce recruiting and hiring costs, employers can directly recruit individuals, receive automatic notifications of candidate applications, receive H2H messages and connection requests, as well as utilize a search function to match experience, education and skills to their job postings.

In addition to the online resources, H2H has employment transition coordinators in every state and U.S. territory who are available to assist veterans and service members. “We will assist with resumes, cover letters, interviewing and H2H-website navigation questions,” said Popowski. “We are career counselors who can give advice and provide helpful resources to those looking for assistance.” Employment transition coordinators can set service members up on the H2H website to begin their personal marketing process, provide them with additional web and print resources, or sit down and work through the entire hiring process from initial resume to the thank you letter after an interview.

“One of the biggest issues I’ve seen is that service members do not know how to market their skills and abilities,” Popowski said. “They’ve spent so much time giving credit to others; they forget how to sell their own best attributes.”

Veterans or service members who are interested in using H2H services can do so by signing up online at www.H2H.jobs, or by calling Dan Popowski at (605) 357-2913, or e-mailing dan-iel.popowski@us.army.mil.



A PROGRAM BY:
 **Yellow Ribbon
Reintegration Program**
For Those Who Serve and Those Who Support

Upcoming Events

Nov. 9—SFVAHCS Flu Shot Clinic—SF VA Medical Center (2501 W. 22nd St) —7:30 am—5:30 pm
 Nov. 9—VABHHCS Caregivers Fair—Fort Meade VA Medical Center - Bldg 145 - Rm 341B (8 am-4 pm)
 Nov. 11—Veterans Day
 Nov. 12—Veterans Day Regional Site Program—Riggs High School Theatre—Pierre—10:45 am
 Nov. 14 — SDDVA Mini Conference—Sturgis - Veterans Club, 868 Main Street
 Nov. 15 — SDDVA Mini Conference—Pierre - American Legion, 520 S. Pierre Street
 Nov. 16 — SDDVA Mini Conference—Brookings – City/County Building, 520 3rd Street
 Nov. 16—VABHHCS Caregivers Fair- Hot Springs VA Medical Center - Bldg 12 - Rm A002 (8 am-4 pm)
 Nov. 26—SFVAHCS Flu Shot Clinic—SF VA Medical Center (2501 W. 22nd St) —7:30 am—5:30 pm
 Dec. 8—Wreaths Across America

FYI — Larry Wilcox, Superintendent of the Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home notes that there are rooms available at the Veterans Home for couples and single veterans.

Please call Larry Wilcox with any inquiries — 605-745-5127.



The South Dakota Department of the Military and the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs offices will be closed on Monday, November 12, 2012, in observance of Veterans Day.

We will also be closed November 23-24 for Thanksgiving. We will reopen on Monday, November 26, at 8:00 am.

**Holiday
Schedule**



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